

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, August 13, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Miss Mabel Hubbard, Brantford, Ontario, Monday, August 13, 1876 Royal Hotel, Hamilton, Ont. Tuesday, Aug. 13, 1876

I suppose Mabel dear it will now be a race between me and my letter as to which shall reach you first. This letter certainly has the start — and it goes direct — by train — while I proceed on my circuitous route by water.

We leave here tomorrow morning for Montreal by the Steamer at nine o'clock. We may have the opportunity of seeing a little of Toronto after crossing Lake Ontario — although I hardly think the boat will remain long enough there for us to venture far from the wharf. I have been down the St. Lawrence twice before and I retain the most pleasant recollections of the beauty of the river and of “The Thousand Isles”. I wish you could be with us to choose our own little island on which to build our summer mansion when the world has been kind enough to give us a fortune! Ah! when will that be?

I shall look for both of us. Biblical scholars have made a sad mistake — they should have located Paradise on the St. Lawrence! If however Paradise means “the happiest place on earth” I know where it is! It is where you are! — at least to me!

My poor Mamma! She is so unhappy at losing us all and seems quite worn out and ill. I wish I could comfort her for Uncle Edward's absence. The separation from me is only temporary — but alas it is her last meeting with her brother — at least as far as human eye can see. After forty years of separation they have met again but for a few short days and now they part — forever.

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“Oh! my friend We twain have met like ships that meet at sea That hold an hour's converse — so short — so sweet And then away they speed (on lonely paths) To meet no more .”

So it is with Mamma and Uncle! Excuse this short note for I am so sad tonight and must write a cheering letter to Mamma.

I am very glad to hear that your Grandmama is herself again. Please remember me to her and to your Grandpapa. After the stifling heat of central Ontario the cool air of the Lake is delightful. I wish Gertrude could be here to enjoy the sail and breathe in a little of Nature's great restorer “ Fresh Air.” A little sunshine too minus the summer heat would do her good. I trust your dear mother has now no cares or anxieties to weary her and worry her — and that her headaches have departed this life in peace leaving her free 2 to enjoy the society of your father and friends. Give my best love to her and to your father, Gertrude, Berta and Grace. Don't think I have forgotten your Auntie Berta — not !! Give her a special love for me — with best wishes for success in her hunt for a parson! I forgot! It was Gertrude who wished the minister. Don't you wish one too? I can import one from Canada if needed — a first-rate article — in good condition too — and with a clean surplice!! With a heartfelt of love for you dear.

Your own, Alec.